

**MOORE OR LESS**

How many of us, apart from the venerable Zygote, can claim to have been using computers since 1965? Forty years ago, a word processor wore a pleated skirt, a pint of Lebanese Gold Ale cost a shilling and, on page 114 of *Electronics* magazine, Moore's Law was first published.

Gordon Moore is the co-founder of Intel. His article was not really a law at all. It was more like an observation saying that every 18 months the number of transistors on a piece of silicon doubles and will continue to do so. He was absolutely right, of course. What he really predicted, though, was that computing power would grow exponentially, thanks to the number of semiconductors that you can miniaturise on a single microchip. In 1965, Intel's chips boasted a few dozen components. Its latest chip has 1.7 billion transistors. Now that's what Zygote calls exponential growth.

However, Moore failed to predict that the cost of this huge increase in power would decrease at an equally alarming rate, allowing the dumbing down of whole aspects of our lives. He also missed a couple of other universal laws, which Zygote believes are just as important. LA Law states that the amount of violence on TV doubles after 9pm, in order to sell shampoo. Whereas double mayo plus the square root of shredded cabbage gives you Cole's Law. Now there's food for thought.

AD NAUSEAM

Online advertising has overtaken commercial radio spending for the first time, rising by 60 per cent last year in the UK. The forecast is that online advertising spending will rise by another 50 per cent this year, a growth rate that is roughly in line with Moore's Law. It's a misconception that

ZYGOTE

Road charges may take their toll on his well-being and telepathic monkeys may threaten to drive him round the bend, but luckily for Zygote there's no law against him having a good old moan about it

the internet is free from regulation. Online advertisers seem to think that they are not subject to the same constraints that govern traditional media such as broadcasting and print. They are not exempt. Since 1995, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has had the power to inflict penalties on companies that break the rules. These rules include online marketing.

The Code of Advertising Practice states that unless you are an existing customer for similar products or services, you have the right to demand that advertisers sending you unsolicited crap should be taken out and shot. But the authority does little or nothing to protect us from commercial online abuse, and Zygote demands action. Every time we receive email garbage from a UK-based company, Zygote urges each and every one of us to complain to the ASA. We should fill in the simple online form at www.asa.org.uk and forward the junk email to the ASA. In fact, we should forward it as many times as we possibly can, to let its employees suffer what we are suffering and bombard them out of their indolence.

STOP WATCH

In the countdown to totalitarianism, 10 companies have been shortlisted to provide half a million onboard computers for the Regime's pet project, known as the Lorry Road User Charge. The aim of the project is for every truck to be monitored by computer and for every haulier, including foreign trucks, to send the time, location and toll data to HM Customs' central billing system. As well as hardware, one company will be appointed to provide data services, another for central administration and yet another for what is ominously called "enforcement".

The first national tolls will come into force in January 2008. Zygote believes this is a vital part of Big Brother's plans to use computers to monitor each one of us and get us to pay dearly for the privilege. No doubt there will be some spurious excuse, based on anti-terrorism, or anti-car theft, or antipasti, but it's a racing certainty that road-user charges will soon be rolled out for all private vehicles. This will be linked to a national network of number plate tracking devices, including cameras

and dashboard radio frequency identification (RFID) chips. We will then have to pay a toll for every mile we travel in the UK, as well as suffering the dehumanising existence of being tracked and watched wherever we go, like animals in a nationwide zoo. Not that it matters, of course, as you'll find out below.

MONKEY BUSINESS

Six years ago, trained monkeys were made to move a robot arm using nothing but their thought waves. More recently, moving images were recorded directly from the neurons of laboratory cats. It has now been reported that Yukiyasu Kamitani in Kyoto and Frank Tong in New Jersey have achieved similar remote 'telepathy' with humans using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), like a hospital MRI scan.

Zygote accepts that such experiments are justified if they are used to make life better for people who are otherwise unable to communicate, such as stroke victims or anyone wearing a Burberry baseball cap. But if computers can be used to read data coming out of human minds, they can also be used to write data going into human minds. Sony has just been granted a series of patents for ultrasound devices that do just that. By changing neural activity in parts of the human brain, artificial sensations can be evoked, including taste, smell, touch and vision.

If you think this technology will be used for the benefit of humanity, you've already been brainwashed. Zygote predicts that neural input will be the biggest and most profitable industry ever. It will also mark the end of *Homo sapiens* and the beginning of *Homo dementis*, as it will be used for three things only: pornography, pornography and pornography. **CS**

Great Moments in Computing
© 1988-2005 Mel Croucher and Robin Grenville-Evans
210: Computer Aided Design



Computer aided design allows engineers and architects to demonstrate the most intricate designs for approval



Thanks to CAD, the client knows exactly what to expect long before the first trench is dug...



...and is safe in the knowledge that what you see is what you get.